United Nations A/68/537–S/2013/622

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
18 October 2013

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 76
Oceans and the law of the sea

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Letter dated 17 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I draw your attention to an incident which took place within the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus.

In particular, on 4 and 5 June 2013, while the seismic vessel *Ramform Sovereign* was sailing, under the flag of Singapore and the ownership of the Norwegian company Petroleum Geo-Services, in the south-western part of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus, it was harassed by the Turkish navy.

It should be underlined that the *Ramform Sovereign* was duly licensed by the competent authorities of the Republic of Cyprus to perform seismic surveys in block 12 of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus.

The incident was reported to the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus by the shipowning company Petroleum Geo-Services. According to the information contained in the logbook of the *Ramform Sovereign* and confirmed by the investigation carried out by the police of Cyprus, the incident occurred as follows:

- On 4 June 2013, at 0600 UTC, the vessel *Ramform Sovereign* entered the western part of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus (33°59.202'N 030°05.322'E) and started the deployment of streamers, in view of the seismic survey which was scheduled to be carried out in exploration block 12, in the southern part of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus.
- At 2335, the *Ramform Sovereign* received a Fleet 77 (Inmarsat) call from the Turkish navy requesting the *Ramform Sovereign* to clear out the area by moving 5 nautical miles south, to steer on course 120° and "remain south of N33°56"7' E031°21"5'/N33°47"2' E032°16"3'".
- At 0020, on 5 June, the Turkish navy called the *Ramform Sovereign*, instructed its captain to turn to starboard and steer upon the given track; otherwise, a warship would be sent to the spot within two minutes.

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- At 0408, a Turkish military vessel called the captain of the *Ramform Sovereign* by VHF 12 and asked for the vessel's details.
- At 0429, the *Ramform Sovereign* received another VHF call from the same Turkish military vessel asking it to alter course to 180°.
- At 0431, the *Ramform Sovereign* started a slow turn to the right and continued on its way towards its planned seismic survey area in block 12 of the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus.

The *Ramform Sovereign* was accompanied by two supportive vessels, the *Flying Enterprise* and the *EDT Argonaut*, both sailing under the flag of Cyprus and belonging to the company EDT Offshore. Even though these supportive vessels were not directly harassed by the Turkish navy, they confirm the presence of a Turkish military vessel during the incident.

The Republic of Cyprus proclaimed its exclusive economic zone in 2004 through the enactment of the Exclusive Economic Zone Law (law No. 64(I)/2004). Furthermore, with regard to its continental shelf, Cyprus enacted the Continental Shelf Law (law No. 8/74). At all times during the incident described above, the *Ramform Sovereign* and its accompanying vessels were within the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus and preparing to carry out a survey with the purpose of exploring the Cypriot continental shelf for hydrocarbons.

The Republic of Turkey, through the actions of its navy against the *Ramform Sovereign*, violated the sovereign right of the Republic of Cyprus to carry out and authorize the carrying out of actions for the exploration of its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf for natural resources, pursuant to articles 56.1 (a) and 77.1, respectively, of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

The Turkish navy, of which at least one vessel was involved in the incident, had no jurisdiction or right to either intervene or instruct the *Ramform Sovereign* in any way.

It is evident that Turkey has once again opted to operate outside international law and to demonstrate in an unequivocal way its hostile intentions against the Republic of Cyprus.

I would be grateful if the present letter were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76, and of the Security Council and published in the next issue of the Law of the Sea Bulletin.

(*Signed*) Nicholas **Emiliou**